



# NEC Bridge Festival

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## Welcome to the 7<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup Bridge Festival: 2001

This year's 7<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup boasts the largest and one of the strongest international fields ever, including many of the world's top players. Stage One will be an 8-round Swiss Teams consisting of 20-board matches, IMPs converted to Victory Points, qualifying eight teams for the KO phase. The 38-team field has been divided into top and bottom halves and the first Swiss match has been arranged so that each team in the top half is matched at random against a team from the bottom half; subsequent match pairings will be based on current VP totals. The quarter-finals and semi-finals will consist of 40-board matches while the final will be contested over 64 boards. Good luck to all the participants.

## The Daily Bulletin/Secretariat Office and the Chief Director

As always, we need your help. Please report anything amusing, challenging, or skillful that happens at this tournament (bridge or otherwise) to the **Daily Bulletin Office** (Room 412). If we're not there, please leave us a note on one of our computers (they are in the back on the far right as you enter the room). Room 412 is also the **Tournament Headquarters**, a.k.a. the **Secretariat**. It will open each day at 10:00 am. If you're trying to reach someone you can't find, leave a message and we'll do our best to get it to its target. You may also contact the Secretariat via a house phone from the hotel or by dialing 222-6759 from the Yokohama area or 045-222-6759 from outside the city area. The **Chief Tournament Director** for this year's **NEC Bridge Festival** will once again be the witty, urbane, unflappable and occasionally immovable **Richard Grenside**. Call him if you wish, but do so at your own risk.

## Today's and Tomorrow's Starting Times

<u>Swiss Match</u>	<u>Starting Time</u>	<u>Rooms</u>
1 & 4	10:00-12:50	416-419
Lunch Break	12:50-14:00	
2 & 5	14:00-16:50	416-419
3 & 6	17:10-20:00	416-419

## Thursday's Starting Times

<u>Swiss Match</u>	<u>Starting Time</u>	<u>Rooms</u>
7	10:00-12:50	416-419
8	13:10-16:00	416-419
NEC Cup QF1	17:10-20:00	416-419

One hundred and seventy minutes (2 hours and 50 minutes) have been allotted for the play of each set of 20 deals. In addition, a 5-minute grace period will be permitted. If you are unable to finish in that time, remember the words of the immortal Nakatani-san, "Play badly if you must, but play quickly."

## NEC Cup 2002: CONDITIONS OF CONTEST

An 8 round Swiss, qualifying the top 8 teams to the Knockout phase; no playbacks.

- V.P. Scale            WBF 20-board scale (a copy can be found in the score book provided in your NEC Bridge Festival bag).
- Seating Rights        Toss of coin 5 minutes before start of match. Failure will constitute loss of rights.
- KO-Phase Seating    The winner of a coin toss has the choice of seating in either of the two 20-board segments. In the four 16-board segments of the final, the choices will alternate over segments.
- Swiss Pairings        For the first and second Swiss matches, pairings will be determined by randomly pairing each of the teams numbered 1-19 with one of the teams numbered 20-38. Subsequent match pairings will be based on current VP totals.
- Home and visiting    1st numbered team sits N/S in open room, E/W in closed room.
- Tie-Breaks            At the end of the Swiss: ties will be broken by the result of the head-to-head match (if one was played) or an IMP quotient otherwise. If more than two teams are involved, WBF 2001 Conditions of Contest procedures will apply.
- In the Knockout Phase, the team with the higher position from the Swiss will be assumed to have a ½-IMP carryover.
- Systems                No HUM methods will be permitted in this event.  
                              In the Swiss, no Brown Sticker methods will be permitted.  
                              In the KO Phase, Brown Sticker methods will be permitted only if filed before the start of the Swiss. Written defenses to such methods may be used at the table.
- Length of Matches    2 hours and 50 minutes will be allotted for each 20-board segment (or 2 hours and 20 minutes for each 16-board segment of the final). In addition a 5-minute grace period will be allotted to each team. Overtime and slow play penalties as per WBF 2001 Conditions of Contest.
- Appeals                The WBF Code of Practice will be in effect. The Chief Director will have 12C3 authority. Appeals which are found to be without merit may incur a penalty of up to 3 VPs.
- Match Scoring        Pick-up slips are to be completed and all match results are to be verified against the official result sheet (posted at the end of each match); score corrections and notifications of appeals will be permitted up until the start of the next session.
- KO Draw                The team finishing 1<sup>st</sup> in the Swiss may choose their opponent from the teams finishing 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The team finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> will have their choice of the remaining teams from the 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> group. And so on.
- In addition, before the start of the Knockout Phase and after all quarter-final draws have been determined, the team that finishes 1<sup>st</sup> in the Swiss chooses their semi-final opponent from any of the other three quarter-final matches.

## Roster of the 6<sup>th</sup> NEC Cup

Team		Members					
No.	Name/Country	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Chinese Taipei	Hsui-hen Hu (pc)	Ding-Min Yen	Jung-Fu Lee	Wei-Ming Chang	Chung-Cheng Chen	Sheng-Feng Wu
2	Netherlands	Jan van Cleeff(pc)	Jan-Paul Vis	Huub Bertens	Ton Bakkeren		
3	India	Subhash Gupta	Mrs. Kiran Nadar	B. Satyanarain	Rajesh Dalal	R. Venkatraman	
4	England/Norway	B. Mavromichalis(np)	Paul Hackett	Justin Hackett	Geir Helgemo	Terje Aa	Glenn Groetheim
5	Russia	Andrei Gromov	Alex Petrunin	Mikhail Krasnosselski	Alexander Doubinine		Jason Hackett
6	England	Brian Senior	John Armstrong	Pablo Lambardi	Brian Callaghan		
7	Sweden	P.O. Sundelin	Johan Sylvan	Magnus Lindkvist	Peter Fredin		
8	USA	Mark Itabashi	Jaggy Shivadansi	Jim Robison			
9	Australia	Cathy Chua	Simon Hinge	Bruce Neill	John Roberts		
10	Austria/Denmark	Tino Terraneo	Josef Simon	Morten Andersen	Soren Christiansen		
11	Canada	Jurek Czyzowicz	Kamel Fergani	Darren Wolpert	Nicolas L'Ecuyer		
12	e-bridge	Sam Lev	Bob Blanchard	Piotr Gawrys	Krzysztof Jassem		
13	Taiwan Amethyst	Violet Liu	Shu-Ying Hsuieh	Piggy Lin	Cindy Chang	Tom Cheng	Masayasu Oga
14	GOING AT' EM	Robert Geller	Setsuko Ogihara	Hidenori Narita	Yoichi Ito	Takashi Sumita	David Turner
15	PABF Open	Tadashi Teramoto	Hideki Takano	Masayuki Ino	Tadashi Imakura	Hiroya Abe	Cheng Dawei
16	PABF Women	Natsuko Nishida	Midori Sakamoto	Setsuko Moriyama	Megumi Takasaki	Makiko Hayashi	Yuko Yamada
17	HANA	Makoto Hirata	Takeshi Hanayama	Takashi Maeda	Nobuyuki Hayashi		
18	SLAM DUNK	Yoshiyuki Nakamura	Kazuo Furuta	Kenji Miyakuni	Yasuhiro Shimizu	Ryoga Tanaka	
19	OKAY	Kyoko Ohno	Akihiko Yamada	Katsumi Takahashi	Masaru Yoshida		
20	PS-JACK	Masakatsu Sugino	Masako Otsuka	Noboru Sato	Masaru Chiba	Keiko Yoshino	Sumiko Sugino
21	ESPERANZA	Haruko Koshi	Mieko Nakanishi	Yoko Osako	Hiroko Janssen	Misuzu Ichihashi	Michiko Iwahashi
22	Three Diamonds	Kyoko Shimamura	Mitsue Tajima	Takahiro Kamiyo	Santje Panelewen	Koji Ito	
23	NAITO	Miho Sekizawa	Ayako Amano	Sakiko Naito	Tomoe Nakao	Nobuko Setoguchi	Hiroko Ota
24	Girasol	Sachiko Yamamura	Taeko Kawamura	Keiko Matsuzaki	Kimi Makita		
25	SKOTII	Tsuneo Sakurai	Shiro Inoue	Atsushi Kikuchi	Yoshiro Tsuji	Kenichi Izaki	
26	GEEZER T	Minoru Mizuta	Masaaki Takayama	Shoko Fukuda	Hiroshi Kaku	Sei Nagasaka	Masayuki Hayasaka
27	HANAGUMI	Yayoi Sakamoto	Toshiko Miyashiro	Yukiko Umezu	Etsuko Naito		
28	CITRUS	Chizuno Saito	Kyoko Toyofuku	Kumiko Matsuo	Momoko Kumano	Takako Nakatani	Mamiko Odaira
29	MATSUBARA	Ryo Matsubara	Ayako Matsubara	Toyohiko Ozawa	Takehiko Tada	Kazuo Takano	Masaaki Kimura
30	TORNADOS Plus	Osami Kimura	Kei Watanabe	Reiko Watanabe	Kinzaburo Nishino	Kiyoko Fushida	Setsuko Kimura
31	2002	Chizuko Tsukamoto	Hiroko Kobayashi	Mieko Tamura	Yasuko Kosaka		
32	Merry Queens	Teruko Nishimura	Junko Nishimura	Toyoko Nakakawaji	Toshiko Hiramori		
33	SWAN	Michiko Shida	Kotomi Asakoshi	Naomi Terauchi	Sachiko Nakatani	Aiko Banno	Minako Hiratsuka
34	K. S.	Takeshi Higashiguchi	Kazunori Sasaki	Ryo Okuno	Yukinao Homma	Zhang Shudi	Koichi Suzuki
35	COSMOS	Nobuko Wakasa	Masaharu Wakasa	Keiko Enomoto	Yoko Takahashi	Kazuko Tsumori	Noriko Komiyama
36	Kinki	Chizuko Sugiura	Sonoko Namba	Toru Tamura	Mimako Ishizuka		
37	Koyuzu	Jun Cheng	Irene Ho	C. C. Wong	P. Chen	Kunio Ueda	Sachiyo Uenaka
38	My-bridge	Masafumi Yoshizawa	Noriko Yoshizawa	Akiko Yanagisawa	Seiko Morinaga	Yoshitaka Agata	Kuniko Miyauchi

Round-1 Match-ups: 1 vs 27; 2 vs 20; 3 vs 32; 4 vs 31; 5 vs 28; 6 vs 25; 7 vs 21; 8 vs 38; 9 vs 30; 10 vs 23; 11 vs 34; 12 vs 35; 13 vs 26; 14 vs 36; 15 vs 33; 16 vs 22; 17 vs 37; 18 vs 29; 19 vs 24

## 2001 NEC Cup: The Millennium Edition

Last year ten star-studded teams from Argentina, Australia, Austria, England/Great Britain (three teams), Indonesia, Sweden, and the USA (two teams) joined twenty-two teams from Japan (including the 1999 NEC Cup champions and current PABF Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup candidates) to vie for top honors. The two American teams, USA (Garey Hayden, Gaylor Kastle, Jim Robison, John Onstott) and e-bridge (Sam Lev, John Mohan, Jacek Pszczola, Piotr Gawrys, Pinhas Romik), were among the stronger teams in the event, with e-bridge one of the pre-tournament favorites, along with Sweden, England (Senior), Australia/Argentina and Great Britain (Hackett), the 2000 winners. Lev, Mohan and Gawrys were (relatively) fresh off their win in last year's World Transnational Mixed Teams in Maastricht; Pszczola is one of the reigning World Open Pairs champions and a runner-up in the Maastricht (Open) Teams Olympiad; and Romik, a Polish and Israeli internationalist, is founder, CEO and President of e-bridge, ACBL's partner in ACBL Online.

In the qualifying Swiss the team from Argentina/Australia took the early Day One lead over the fierce Japanese OHNO team, followed by an all-Australian team. By Day Two the English team captained by Brian Senior took a sizeable lead, followed by Sweden, Argentina/Australia and OHNO. England hung on to head the qualifiers, followed by Sweden, Argentina/Australia, Great Britain, Australia, Indonesia, e-bridge and Japan (OHNO).

In the knockouts, the top three finishers chose their opponents: England chose Australia, Sweden chose OHNO, Argentina/Australia chose Indonesia, and Great Britain was left to play e-bridge. England and Sweden won their quarter-final matches in blowouts while Argentina/Australia bested Indonesia in a closer contest. Team e-bridge, hampered by erratic play throughout the early stages of the event, got it together to overcome a 9-imp deficit with 16 boards to go to win by 22imps over Great Britain. It would be England (**Senior-Erichsen, Fawcett-Liggins**) versus Sweden (**Sundelin-Sylvan, Fallenius-Lindkvist**) and Argentina/Australia (**Lambardi-Ravenna,**

**Marston-Del'Monte**) versus Team e-bridge (**Lev-Mohan, Gawrys-Pszczola**, now playing four-handed) in the semi-finals.

Here's an example of the exciting bridge which characterized the semi-finals.

Bd: 22	North	
Dir: East	♠ J84	
Vul: E/W	♥ J87543	
	♦ 952	
	♣ 4	
West		East
♠ 953		♠ 62
♥ 9		♥ AQ6
♦ QJ874		♦ AK1063
♣ J1086		♣ A73
	South	
	♠ AKQ107	
	♥ K102	
	♦ ---	
	♣ KQ952	

In England versus Sweden these were the auctions:

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Sylvan	Liggins	Sundelin	Fawcett
		1♣(1)	1♠
Pass	2♠	Dbl	4♠
All Pass			
(1) 11-13 balanced or any 17+			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Erichsen	Lindkvist	Senior	Fallenius
		1NT	Dbl
2♦	2♥	2NT	4♥
All Pass			

Sundelin showed a strong club at his second turn, then sold out to 4♠ when Sylvan took no part in the proceedings with a promising hand (give Sundelin a singleton spade and the ♣9 and 5♦ would have been excellent). The play was spectacular. On the essential lead of the ♥9, Fawcett dropped the ten under Sundelin's

ace. This had the desired effect, for Sundelin switched to a diamond. Fawcett ruffed, drew two trumps (all he could afford) with the ace and jack, and passed the ♡8 as Sylvan correctly refused to ruff. Fawcett now led a club, Sundelin following low. The ♣K won and when Fawcett led the ♡K the focus was back on Sylvan. Once again he refused to ruff, successfully shutting out the heart suit. Fawcett ruffed a club and played a heart, discarding a club. Sylvan ruffed at last to play a diamond, but when Fawcett ruffed and exited with a low club the ace fell and he had the rest; a breathless plus 420. It would have been best for Sylvan to follow to the second club with an honor, leaving it open to Fawcett to later lead the queen to try to smother the other honor. Following low left Fawcett no losing option.

Senior's seriously strong notrump did not get in his opponents' way. Lindkvist fearlessly introduced his hearts and Fallenius took a shot at game. Lindkvist ruffed the diamond lead, came to the ♠J, and led a club. Had Senior ducked, Lindkvist would have scrambled home on a cross-ruff, but Senior rose with the ace to play ace and another trump. Lindkvist still had to lose to the master trump but discarded both losing diamonds on the ♣KQ for plus 420. No swing, but what a push it was!

In Argentina/Australia versus e-bridge these were the auctions:

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Lambardi	Mohan	Ravenna
		1NT	Dbl
2♣(1)	Pass	2♦	2♠
3♦	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) Scramble			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Marston	Pszczola	Del'Monte	Gawrys
		1♣(1)	1♠
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
2♦	Pass	3♦	Dbl
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) 15+ HCP			

The play at both tables here was a striking

counterpoint to the happenings in the other match. Lev led the ♡9 against Ravenna's 4♠ and when Ravenna did not drop the ten under the ace the position was clear to Mohan, who returned the ♡6. Lev ruffed away the ♡10 but then had to decide which minor to lead. Although the auction confirmed that Mohan had at least four diamonds and Lev had a shrewd idea that Mohan held the heart queen (no unblock by declarer) and didn't return it to suggest a diamond return, Lev tried a diamond. Ravenna ruffed, drew two trumps, unblocked the ♡K, and conceded a club for plus 420.

After Gawrys ostensibly bid game by himself, Marston led the ♡9 to the ace. Gawrys dropped the ten but Del'Monte was not fooled and returned the ♡6. Marston ruffed and led a club to get his second ruff for one down, minus 50, and 10 well-deserved IMPs to Argentina/Australia.

Sweden defeated England 111-70, and e-bridge bested Argentina/Australia 147-109. The final would be between the punters' two pre-tournament favorites: Sweden versus e-bridge.

### The Final:

Sweden took the early lead on this deal when South had a critical decision early in the auction.

Bd: 3	North		
Dir: South	♠ 7		
Vul: E/W	♡ K108652		
	◇ AQ3		
	♣ 1093		
West		East	
♠ J109		♠ 543	
♡ Q		♡ AJ9	
◇ 108742		◇ K965	
♣ K762		♣ Q84	
	South		
	♠ AKQ862		
	♡ 743		
	◇ J		
	♣ AJ5		

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Lindkvist	Mohan	Fallenius
			1♠
Pass	2♦(♥)	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	All Pass	
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Sylvan	Pszczola	Sundelin	Gawrys
			1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

Fallenius judged well to show support, jumping to invite game, and Lindkvist duly accepted. Lev led a low club to the queen and ace. Fallenius won and played: ♦A, diamond ruff, three top spades pitching clubs, club ruff, diamond ruff, trump. He lost only three trump tricks for plus 420.

In the Closed Room Gawrys judged to rebid his own suit and Pszczola raised to game on a singleton. Even with spades splitting favorably, Pszczola's hearts could not make the same contribution to 4♠ as Fallenius' spades had to Lindkvist's 4♥ in the Open Room. On the club lead Gawrys had to lose a club and three hearts for one down, minus 50. 10 imps to Sweden.

A few boards later, this lively number graced the tables. Buckle up.

Bd: 7	North	
Dlr: South	♠ 752	
Vul: Both	♥ J976	
	♦ 10	
	♣ Q9832	
West		East
♠ A9		♠ Q4
♥ AK8542		♥ Q103
♦ KQ9		♦ J8532
♣ A5		♣ J107
	South	
	♠ KJ10863	
	♥ ---	
	♦ A764	
	♣ K64	

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Lindkvist	Mohan	Fallenius
			1♠
Dbl	2♥(1)	Pass	2♠
3♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
(1) Transfer (spade raise)			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Sylvan	Pszczola	Sundelin	Gawrys
			1♠
Dbl	2♠	Pass	4♠
Dbl	All Pass		

If Lindkvist's raise was a psychic (one of us, EOK, thinks it showed a "fair" three-card raise even though South did not give it much respect) it didn't work; Lev-Mohan got to their game anyhow and the Swedes did not "save" against it. Lindkvist led his singleton diamond, Lev dropping the queen under the ace, but Fallenius gave Lindkvist his ruff anyhow as Lev unblocked his ♦K and claimed eleven tricks; plus 650. Note that 4♥ can be held to ten tricks if South finds a duck of the ♦A at trick one. That's too tough for us, even at Matchpoints.

But the real fireworks occurred in the Closed Room where Gawrys put maximum pressure on Sylvan by leaping to 4♠. Sylvan chose a second double and now E/W's fate was in Sundelin's hands. With 4♠ cold, E/W would have to bid on to salvage anything from the deal. Whether or not 5♦ would have led to 5♥ (doubtful) is unclear, but that would have worked better than Sundelin's very reasonable pass. Sylvan led the ♥A and Gawrys ruffed, led a club to the queen, then started to cross-ruff: Diamond to the ace, diamond ruff, heart ruff, diamond ruff. Here Gawrys needed to play a black card from dummy but erred and ruffed another heart, then tried to ruff his fourth diamond. Sylvan ruffed with the ♠9 and now the contract was slated to go down. Gawrys pitched a heart from dummy and Sylvan accurately cashed the ♠A, then continued with the ♥K. Sundelin only needed to discard to beat the contract but when he ruffed with the ♠Q, Gawrys could overruff and knock out the ♣A while he still had trump control. (If Sundelin pitches, Gawrys can ruff and draw the last

trump, but when he knocks out the ♣A Sylvan would cash a good heart for down one); +790 with +650 combined to produce 16 imps for e-bridge, leapfrogging them into the lead, 28-20.

Early in the second quarter, this little cat-and-mouse gem occurred.

Bd: 18	North		
Dlr: East	♠ 9752		
Vul: N/S	♥ A107		
	♦ QJ104		
	♣ KJ		
West	East		
♠ AJ104	♠ KQ6		
♥ KJ4	♥ Q9852		
♦ A865	♦ K7		
♣ 96	♣ Q54		
	South		
	♠ 83		
	♥ 63		
	♦ 932		
	♣ A108732		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Lindkvist	Mohan	Fallenius
		1♥	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Sylvan	Pszczola	Sundelin	Gawrys
		1♥	Pass
2♣(1)	Pass	2♦(2)	Pass
2♥(3)	Pass	2NT(4)	Pass
4♥	All Pass		
(1) Clubs or game-forcing relay; (2) Minimum; (3) Relay; (4) Balanced			

Both Souths led a spade to the king and both declarers led a trump: Mohan to the jack, Sundelin to the king. But here the two paths diverged. Lindkvist took the jack with the ace and played ♣K, ♣J. Mohan followed low from hand but Fallenius overtook with the ♣A to lead a third round. Mohan knew his opponents might be laying a trap with clubs breaking normally, but decided that he would pay off to that. He ruffed

with dummy's ♥K, then finessed against North's ten to bring in his game; +420. Well done, indeed. In the Closed Room Pszczola did not take Sundelin's ♥K with the ace. A low heart from dummy would have seen him home, but Sundelin had no reason to play that way and every reason to continue with the ♥J. Unfortunately for him, Pszczola won the ace and played ♣K, ♣J. Gawrys overtook and played a third club and Pszczola scored his ♥10 on an overruff. Hubba, hubba. 10 imps to e-bridge, who led by 7 imps, 71-64, at the half.

Sweden took the lead in the third quarter on this rare defensive error by Gawrys.

Bd: 38	North		
Dlr: East	♠ Q3		
Vul: E/W	♥ J742		
	♦ K103		
	♣ 10543		
West	East		
♠ A762	♠ K985		
♥ 95	♥ AKQ10		
♦ QJ9	♦ 765		
♣ J986	♣ A7		
	South		
	♠ J104		
	♥ 863		
	♦ A842		
	♣ KQ2		
Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Sylvan	Mohan	Sundelin
		1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♥	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Fallenius	Pszczola	Lindkvist	Gawrys
		1♣(1)	Pass
1♥(2)	Pass	1♠(3)	Pass
1NT(3)	Pass	2♣(3)	Pass
2♦(3)	Pass	4♠	All Pass
(1) 11-13 BAL, any 17+, or short diamonds, 11-16; (2) 8+ HCP, 4+ spades; (3) Relay			

In the Open Room Lev-Mohan had a normal Stayman auction to 4♠ and Sundelin started a low trump to the queen and king. Mohan attacked diamonds, playing low to the queen and king, and Sylvan returned a trump to the ten and ace. Mohan ran the ♣J to the queen and Sundelin drew a third round of trumps before cashing his ♦A. That was one down; minus 100.

Against Fallenius-Lindkvist's Swedish Club auction Gawrys also led a low trump. Lindkvist took the queen with the king and played a low club to Gawrys' queen. Back came a second trump. Now Lindkvist played a heart to the ten and followed with three more rounds of hearts, pitching two of dummy's diamonds. Gawrys followed helplessly to the first three hearts but erred by ruffing the fourth. (If he pitches, he can gain the lead with the ♦A and draw a third round of trumps: declarer ends up a trick short. An initial diamond lead followed by a second diamond beats 4♠ off the top, as now declarer cannot avoid a club and a trump loser.) Lindkvist now had ten tricks for plus 620 and a 12-imp gain for Sweden, who led 88-79.

Sweden trailed e-bridge by 7 imps, 108-101, with only 16 boards left for the championship.

Late in the final segment, with Sweden trailing e-bridge, 127-117, there came...

Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Sylvan	Mohan	Sundelin
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
4NT	All Pass		
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Fallenius	Pszczola	Lindkvist	Gawrys
1♣(1)	Pass	1♠(2)	Pass
1NT(3)	Pass	2♣*	Pass
2♦(3)	Pass	2♥*	Pass
2♠(3)	Pass	3♦*	Pass
4♣*	Pass	4♠	Pass
6♦	All Pass		
(1) Three-way 1♣, F1			
(2) 4+♥, 8+ HCP, not BAL; (3) Relay			

In the natural USA auction, Mohan had to decide whether he had enough in reserve to go on over Lev's invitation. The ♠Q and jack-third of diamonds were positive features, although a higher diamond would have been nice. If he had been certain that Lev would deliver two hearts and one club (else 4♣) we think he would have bid the slam. Perhaps a five-level move to keep his options open would have been the best way to proceed. Plus 490. In contrast, the Swedish auction, involving questions and answers, allowed the strong hand to find out what he needed to know; plus 920. 10 imps to Sweden, tying the match at 127 with four deals to go.

After an exchange of small swings, Sweden led 129-128 with two boards remaining. It doesn't get any better than this. As North you pick up:

♠ AQ8764 ♥ 106 ♦ 7 ♣ J742.

Partner opens 1NT and it's your turn. In one room 1NT showed 14-16 and Sylvan settled for a gentle invitation with a specialized Jacoby transfer. Sundelin declined with a good 15 but only a doubleton spade. In the other room 1NT showed 15-17 and Pszczola drove to game via Texas. If you still don't know who was right, here's the whole deal:

Bd: 60	North		
Dlr: West	♠ 9876		
Vul: N/S	♥ A10		
	♦ 10		
	♣ KJ6432		
West		East	
♠ AKJ43		♠ Q	
♥ 85		♥ KQ73	
♦ AKQ43		♦ J65	
♣ 8		♣ AQ1097	
	South		
	♠ 1052		
	♥ J9642		
	♦ 9872		
	♣ 5		



Bd: 63	North		
Dir: South	♠ AQ8764		
Vul: N/S	♥ 106		
	♦ 7		
	♣ J742		
West		East	
♠ 109		♠ J53	
♥ K872		♥ QJ3	
♦ Q54		♦ A9832	
♣ KQ53		♣ 98	
	South		
	♠ K2		
	♥ A954		
	♦ KJ106		
	♣ A106		

Bd: 64	North		
Dir: West	♠ K3		
Vul: E/W	♥ AK8		
	♦ AJ765		
	♣ J107		
West		East	
♠ J		♠ A10952	
♥ 107642		♥ 93	
♦ KQ83		♦ 92	
♣ Q65		♣ A943	
	South		
	♠ Q8764		
	♥ QJ5		
	♦ 104		
	♣ K82		

Although 4♠ is not a superb contract, it falls into the category of normal games you'd like to be in if the other guys are going to bid it. But should a one-point difference in the minimum for the two pairs' notrump openings carry such great significance?

Looking at the four hands, you probably still don't know who was right. Sundelin got a trump lead, won the ace, and misguessed diamonds. The accurate heart switch from Lev forced him to take the ruffing finesse in diamonds to discard a heart from dummy. He still had to lose two clubs but made nine tricks; plus 140. Well judged!

No cigar, however. Fallenius led the ♣K against Gawrys' 4♠ and when Lindkvist went up with the ♦A Gawrys was plus 650. It's an imperfect world, which is why cutting it fine on deals like this is such a dangerous way to approach the game. 11 imps to e-bridge, leading 139-129. One last chance to pull out the desperately close match.



Open Room			
West	North	East	South
Lev	Sylvan	Mohan	Sundelin
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥(1)
Pass	2NT(2)	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
(1) 5+♠, at least invitational; (2) Maximum			
Closed Room			
West	North	East	South
Fallenius	Pszczola	Lindkvist	Gawrys
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♥(♠)
Pass	2♠	Pass	2NT
All Pass			

Amazingly, the same sort of deal presented itself immediately, almost as if a chance for redemption were being offered. And even more amazingly, the potential game was again vulnerable. This time, however, it was the Swedes who attempted game while the Poles did not. And again it was the vagaries of the opening notrump range that played a role, although it looks as if Sundelin was really looking for a miracle by moving forward with a junky 8-count opposite a 16-point maximum. He was right to do so, however, as this was indeed his only chance to win the match.

Against Pszczola's 2NT, Lindkvist led a club, ducked to the queen, and a second club went to the ace, Pszczola unblocking the king to win the third club in hand. A diamond to the ten lost to the queen and the ♠J went to the king and ace.

After cashing his club winner, Lindkvist switched to the ♡9 and there was no way for Pszczola to get home; minus 50.

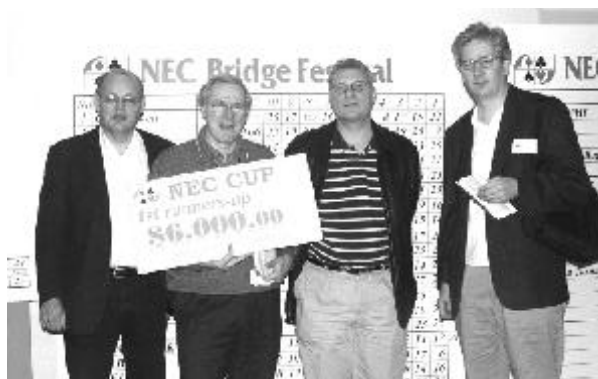
The defense started the same way against Sylvan's 3NT and here too a diamond was led to the ten and queen. Lev switched to a heart, however, and Sylvan won in dummy to lead a diamond to the jack. He cleared diamonds, and now Lev put Mohan in with the ♠A to cash his club. Down two, minus 100. 2imps to e-bridge.

This one went right down to the wire, with Team e-bridge emerging victorious, 141-129. Sam Lev, John Mohan, Piotr Gawrys, Jacek Pszczola, with Pinhas Romik as npc were the 2001 NEC Cup Champions.

The Festival also featured two other events: The OUCHI Cup, a two-day Swiss team, was won by the Japanese team of Yugo Taka, Katsuhiko Ueki, Noboru Shida and Yumiko Eto. The Asuka Cup, a pair event traditionally held on the final day of the Festival, was won by Akiko Yanagisawa and David Turner.



2001 NEC Cup champions (l to r): John Mohan, Piotr Gawrys, Jacek Pszczola, Sam Lev (not pictured, Pinhas Romik, npc)



2001 NEC Cup runners-up (l to r): Magnus Lindkvist, P.O. Sundelin, Bjorn Fallenius, Johan Sylvan

## 7<sup>th</sup> NEC Bridge Festival Daily Schedule

Day/Date	Time	Event	Location
Tuesday (Jan. 29)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 1	Room 416-419 (20 boards/match)
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 2	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 3	
Wednesday (Jan. 30)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 4	Room 416 & 417
	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 5	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 6	
Thursday (Jan. 31)	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 7	Room 416 & 417
	13:10-16:00	NEC Cup Swiss - Match 8	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Quarter-Final 1	
	10:00-12:50	NEC Cup Quarter-Final 2	
Friday (Feb. 1)	12:50-14:00	Lunch Break	Room 416 & 417
	14:00-16:50	NEC Cup Semi-Final 1	
	17:10-20:00	NEC Cup Semi-Final 2	
	10:00-12:20	NEC Cup Final 1 & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Playoff	
Saturday (Feb. 2)	12:30-14:50	NEC Cup Final 2 & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Playoff	Room 416 & 417
	16:00-18:20	NEC Cup Final 3	
	18:30-20:50	NEC Cup Final 4	
	10:00-17:00	OUCHI Cup	
Sunday (Feb. 3)	10:00-17:00	Asuka Cup	Room 501 & 502
	18:00-19:00	Closing Ceremony	Room 301 & 302
			Room 303 & 304

# THE 2001 WORLD BRIDGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Paris, France: Oct 22-Nov 3, 2001

by Eric Kokish

The daunting task of finding a suitable alternative venue for the World Championships in the wake of the shocking events of Sept 11, then moving the tournament from Bali to Paris, was miraculously accomplished by the WBF's dynamic President José Damiani. He was able to mobilize a team of dedicated colleagues and enlisted the cooperation of many different individuals and organizations to get the job done. For his remarkable efforts in saving a potentially disastrous situation, Damiani was named the International Bridge Press Association's Personality of the Year for an unprecedented second time.

## The Main Events (Bermuda Bowl and Venice Cup)

### Round Robin Stage:

#### Bermuda Bowl

1 POLAND .....	311
2 NORWAY .....	311
3 USA 2 .....	310
4 USA 1 .....	306
5 ITALY .....	300
6 FRANCE .....	269
7 INDIA .....	263
8 INDONESIA .....	259
9 EGYPT .....	248
10 RUSSIA .....	245.6
11 ISRAEL .....	243.5
12 AUSTRALIA .....	238.9
13 NEW ZEALAND .....	228
14 JAPAN .....	226
15 ARGENTINA .....	217.5
16 BRAZIL .....	215
17 GUADELOUPE .....	192
18 HONG KONG .....	174

#### Venice Cup

1 FRANCE .....	342
2 USA 1 .....	309
3 CHINA .....	307
4 ENGLAND .....	307
5 GERMANY .....	287
6 AUSTRIA .....	280

7 SOUTH AFRICA .....	275
8 USA 2 .....	268
9 NETHERLANDS .....	263
10 ITALY .....	247
11 JAPAN .....	244
12 ISRAEL .....	240
13 CANADA .....	235.6
14 BRAZIL .....	221.5
15 AUSTRALIA .....	215
16 INDONESIA .....	197
17 VENEZUELA .....	169.5
18 INDIA .....	144.4

### The Quarterfinals (96 deals):

#### Bermuda Bowl

Poland (on a tie-break) finished first, selected India, built a 95-IMP lead at the half, and won in comfort, 279-105, ending India's terrific run.

Norway chose Indonesia and broke open a close match in the fourth and fifth sets, winning 297-215.3

USA2 chose France, carrying forward 15 IMPs, and won all six segments, pulling away in the second half to coast home, 276-178.

To no one's surprise, USA1 was left to face Italy in a battle of the titans. Italy erased a 5-IMP carryunder and won the first set 43-14, then the second segment, 55-27, but in the middle of that session the Italian lead had climbed to 82 IMPs. The tenor of the match began to change and USA1 won the third segment 71-28 to trailed by just 9 IMPs. With 32 deals left to play the margin was down to just 1 IMP, but those two segments would be played the next day. The break in the action also broke the American momentum, but no one could have predicted what was to transpire...the Italians won the fifth set 57-0 with some magnificent bridge, earning virtually everything they got. The sixth set provided no further turnaround, Italy winning it 67-9 to send the defending champs home on the short end of 146-262 score.

One of my favourite deals was this one from the fifth set, with Italy still 1-IMP ahead:

Bd: 67	North		
Dlr: South	♠ A9832		
Vul: E/W	♥ A		
	♦ 1064		
	♣ AQ97		
West		East	
♠ K54		♠ 1076	
♥ Q10984		♥ K6532	
♦ KJ3		♦ 9	
♣ K5		♣ J862	
	South		
	♠ QJ		
	♥ J7		
	♦ AQ8752		
	♣ 1043		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Versace</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>	<i>Lauria</i>
			Pass
1♥	1♠	3♦(1)	Dbl
3♥	Dbl	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) Mixed heart raise!			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Hamman</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Soloway</i>
			Pass
1♥	1♠	3♥(1)	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
(1) Preemptive heart raise			

With diamonds lying badly for N/S, they will usually need to find both black kings onside (West will presumably attack the right suit if one of the kings is wrong) to make 5♦, which is nonetheless a worthwhile contract. Here, however, both N/S pairs reached the touch-and-go contract of 4♠. Both Easts led their singleton diamond. At both tables West was permitted to win the first diamond trick.

Both **Giorgio Duboin** and **Jeff Meckstroth** switched to a heart, but that was not good enough: declarer won, led a trump to the jack

and king, won the club switch (Duboin led the king, Meckstroth the five) cheaply, crossed to the xsQ, ruffed a heart, drew trumps with the ♠A, and ducked a diamond, +620. Still Italy by 1.

Both Wests had missed their chance to defeat the contract. After winning the first trick West must return the suit, giving East a ruff. Declarer wins the heart or club return and plays ace and another trump, catching East's ten, but West wins the king and returns his last diamond, prematurely removing declarer's internal diamond entry to dummy while West still has a trump. This form of defense is always difficult to recognise at the table and not so easy to see on paper. As it happened, this was the last opportunity the Italians would miss, running off 57 unanswered IMPs over the next 13 deals.

### Venice Cup

France selected South Africa and won handily, 254-132.

USA1 started with a 1-IMP carryover advantage against Germany but soon regretted their selection (which had been a difficult choice) as Germany won the first set 49-35 and the second 57-3. The Americans fought back in the third and fourth segments, which they won 55-32 and 57-31. However, here too the conclusion of play for the day changed the momentum, and the first set of the new day proved conclusive, Germany winning it 68-10. Although the Americans won the final set 35-27, they bowed out of the event, 196-264.

China selected Austria, started 5.7 IMPs behind and dropped the first two sets 14-28 and 43-56 before winning the third, 45-26. It was close after 48 deals, but Austria took charge in the second half, winning all three sets by significant amounts. The final score was 237.7-157.

England was left to face USA2, the defending Olympiad champions. England started with the maximum carryover of 16 IMPs but the Americans had gained the lead by halftime and showed some strength in the fourth and fifth sets. England won the last set 38-25, but USA2 won by 54, 265-211.

## The Semifinals (96 deals):

### Bermuda Bowl

Poland (**Marcin Lesniewski /Krzysztof Martens, Cezary Balicki/Adam Zmudzinski, Michal Kwiecien/Jacek Pszczola; Boguslaw Skuza**, npc; **Wojciech Siwiec**, coach) drew USA2 (**Chip Martel/Lew Stansby, Alan Sontag/Peter Weichsel, Kyle Larsen/Rose Meltzer; Jan Martel** npc; **Fred Gitelman/Sheri Winestock** coaches). Poland started with a 3-IMP carryover advantage but USA2 won the first set 33-8 and retained the lead at the conclusion of each of the first five sets. Poland cut the deficit to just 13 going into the final session, but USA2 gave up just 1 IMP down the stretch and won by 36, 169-133.

	C/O	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Poland	3	8	50	11	27	33	1	133
USA2		33	30	21	38	23	24	169

Norway (**Geir Helgemo/Tor Helness, Terje Aa/Glenn Groetheim, Boye Brogeland/Erik Saelensminde, Einar Brenne**, npc; **Rolf Olsen** coach) faced Italy (**Norberto Bocchi/Giorgio Duboin, Lorenzo Lauria/Alfredo Versace, Dano De Falco/Guido Ferraro; Maria Teresa Lavazza**, npc; **Massimo Ortensi**, coach) in the other semifinal, with Norway enjoying the maximum carryover of 16 IMPs. At the half, Norway led by 19, but a strong fourth segment built their lead to 46. Italy rallied in the fifth set, cutting the margin to 24 to set up a nail-biting final segment, and Norway's lead was down to 5 IMPs with two boards to play. There was swing potential in Board 95 but no IMPs exchanged hands, which set the stage for:



"Look, food!"

Bd: 96	North		
Dlr: West	♠ KQ543		
Vul: E/W	♥ 6543		
	♦ ---		
	♣ KQ92		
West		East	
♠ 8		♠ AJ92	
♥ A10987		♥ KQJ2	
♦ K109		♦ 6542	
♣ J863		♣ 10	
	South		
	♠ 1076		
	♥ ---		
	♦ AQJ873		
	♣ A754		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Lauria</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Versace</i>
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT*	Pass	4♠
All Pass			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Duboin</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Bocchi</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
1♥	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Once both N/S pairs reached 4♠, Italy could not win unless Helness failed while Lauria succeeded.

Helness ruffed the lead of the ♥K in dummy, led the ♦Q to ruff out West's king, ruffed a second heart in dummy to discard his last two heart losers on high diamonds, then led the ♠10 to the king and ace. Another heart tapped him, but because trumps were four-one, he could have succeeded by playing side-suit winners. He cashed the ♠Q, however, and finished one down: -50.

Now everything turned on the result in the Open Room. It's unusual to lead a singleton, with both a strong trump holding and a sound alternative, but that's just what Aa did (perhaps following the advice of Anders Wirgren in a his enlightening series of articles published at [www.e-bridgemaster.com](http://www.e-bridgemaster.com)), after considerable

thought. Lauria, apparently crediting Aa with a different sort of lead problem, placed him with a doubleton club. He won the ♣A in dummy and unblocked the nine from hand, then started diamonds by leading the queen, ruffing away the king. He ruffed a heart, cashed the ♦A to discard a heart and the ♦J to discard... a club, then led a club to the king. Aa ruffed and to defeat the contract had to play ace-jack of trumps, giving up a natural trump trick in exchange for two heart winners, not an everyday strategy. It took some time, but Aa got it right to preserve the Norwegian win.

Norway's victory meant that Italy and Poland would reprise their encounter in the Maastricht Olympiad final, after all...but only in the Playoff for third place. Norway would meet USA2 in the Bermuda Bowl final.

	C/O	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Norway	16	21	24	32	53	14	34	194
Italy		19	41	14	26	36	53	189

### Venice Cup

France (**Veronique Bessis/Catherine d'Ovidio, Benedicte Cronier/Sylvie Willard, Catherine Fishpool/Elizabeth Hugon; Patrick Grenthe**, npc) started with near-maximum carryover against USA2 (**Mildred Breed/Shawn Quinn, Petra Hamman/Joan Jackson, Robin Klar/Kay Schulle; Charles Weed**, npc) and soon built an 85-IMP halftime advantage. The Americans won two of the last three sets by small margins but France won convincingly by 113.5 IMPs to reach the final.

	C/O	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
France	15.5	24	64	27	36	66	29	261.5
USA2		16	8	21	38	26	39	148

Germany (**Sabine Auken/Daniela von Arnim, Pony Nehmert/Andrea Rauscheid, Katrin Farwig/Barbara Hackett; Christoph Kemmer**, npc; **Joerg Fritsche**, coach) and Austria (**Doris Fischer/Terry Weigkrcht, Maria Erhart/Jovanka Smederevac, Sylvia Terraneo/Alice Redermeier; Gustav Floszmann**, npc) have played some epic matches in the past, and this one figured to extend the tradition. Austria wiped out Germany's (maximum) carryover advantage in

the first segment, but Germany reclaimed the lead in the second and built it to 20 IMPs at the half. Two virtual standoffs set the stage for a tense final stanza, but Germany closed out the match with a strong performance down the stretch, winning by 33 IMPs. It would be Germany vs France in the final.

	C/O	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Germany	16	27	31	54	47	29	36	240
Austria		45	27	36	48	29	22	207

### The Finals:

#### Bermuda Bowl (128 deals)

Norway, playing with skill and the better of the luck, led by 79 IMPs at the half. The Americans were not playing particularly badly, however, so it seemed possible that the match would get closer and provide an exciting finish. Or not! After 69 deals, Norway had built their lead to 91 IMPs.

But then the tide turned. By the end of the Segment Five the Americans had closed to within just 38 IMPs. They kept up the pressure in the sixth segment and closed out the second day on a strong run that tied the match at 195. Norway gained 2 IMPs in the penultimate set, setting up...

#### Segment Eight (Boards 113-128):

Bd: 113	North	
Dlr: North	♠ AKJ75	
None Vul:	♥ K76	
	♦ ---	
	♣ J10754	
West		East
♠ 9842		♠ Q3
♥ QJ		♥ 10983
♦ J876543		♦ A102
♣ ---		♣ Q832
	South	
	♠ 106	
	♥ A542	
	♦ KQ9	
	♣ AK96	

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♦(1)	Pass	3NT
Pass	4♦(2)	Pass	4♥
Pass	4♠	Pass	5♣

All Pass

(1) Splinter for clubs

(2) Diamond void

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	4♦(1)	Pass	4♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♣(2)
Pass	5♦(3)	Pass	6♣

All Pass

(1) Void, agreeing clubs; 3♦ would have been natural, 5/5+

(2) 3 key cards (not counting the ♦A)

(3) Trump queen ask; South must guess with AKxxx

Groetheim led the ♥Q against Sontag's 5♣. Declarer won the ace and ran the ♦Q, discarding a heart from dummy. Aa won the ♦A and knocked out the ♥K. Sontag continued by running the ♣J, drew all the trumps, discarded a spade from dummy on the ♦K, and passed the ♠10 to the queen: +400.

6♣ can be made after the heart lead with careful play: win the ♥A, cash the ♣A, unblocking the seven when West shows out, ruff a diamond high and lead a trump, covering East's card, ruff a diamond high, and concede a spade; whatever East leads next (including the ♦A to force dummy's last trump), declarer can coup East's trumps.

Stansby, with deceit in mind, led a non-standard diamond spot card against 6♣, but the diamond lead helped Helgemo to develop the play. He trumped with the ♣4, led the ♣7 to his ace, and ran the ♠10. Martel won and switched to a heart but Helgemo won the ace, ruffed a diamond with the ♣J, and led the ♣10, covered. He won, crossed to the ♠A, led the ♣5 to his six, cashed the ♣9 to discard dummy's heart loser, led to the ♥K, and

claimed with dummy's high spades: +920. 11 IMPs to Norway, ahead now by 13, 250-237.

Bd: 114	North
Dlr: East	♠ KQ2
N/S Vul:	♥ 765
	♦ QJ87
	♣ 753

West	East
♠ J95	♠ A643
♥ A942	♥ 83
♦ K952	♦ A643
♣ 106	♣ J94

South
♠ 1087
♥ KQJ10
♦ 10
♣ AKQ82

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
		1NT(1)	2NT(2)
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

(1) 9-11 HCP

(2) Four hearts, longer minor, constructive

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
		Pass	1♣
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
All Pass			

It's easy to understand the auction of Helness/Helgemo, and 2♣ was a normal resting place: +110 after the lead of the ♦2 to the ace and two rounds of hearts.

Aa's 9-11 notrump deprived Sontag of the pleasure of opening 1♦ (five-card majors, 2♣=6+ cards) with the South cards. Here Sontag could overcall 2NT, quite a descriptive action, and Weichsel's aggressive-looking raise was probably the indicated continuation. Groetheim led the ♦5, and Aa won the ace to switch to the ♠4, ten, jack, king. A heart went to the king and ace and when Groetheim returned the ♠9 (having been told that 2NT would normally show four hearts and a six-card minor, he believed that Aa held five spades and that the ♠9 was going to defeat the contract) Sontag

could cover with the queen to create a third round stopper with his eight: +630. 11 IMPs to USA, 248-250.

Bd: 115	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K52		
E/W Vul:	♥ 43		
	♦ J10987		
	♣ Q52		
West	East		
♠ A943	♠ Q87		
♥ Q108	♥ AJ7		
♦ AQ65	♦ K43		
♣ A10	♣ 7643		
	South		
	♠ J106		
	♥ K9652		
	♦ 2		
	♣ KJ98		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
			Pass
1NT(1)	Pass	2NT	Pass
3NT	All Pass		
(1) 14-16 HCP			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
			Pass
1♦	Pass	2♥(1)	Pass
2NT(2)	Pass	3NT	All Pass
(1) Strong, natural, or 10-11 HCP balanced with 4+♣			
(2) 15+; balanced			

Both Norths led a diamond honor. Groetheim won the ace and ran the ♥10. Sontag took the ♥K and switched to the ♣8 to the ten and queen. A second club drove out the ace and when Weichsel came in with the ♠K, he had a club to lead to set the contract: -100.

Stansby won the ♦Q, leaving both opponents in doubt about the location of the ace, and tried a low spade to the queen at trick two, North following low. Declarer cleared spades and Helness switched accurately to the ♣2. Helgemo played the king and Stansby ducked.

The club continuation was taken by the ace but left North with a curious problem. Had he kept the blocking ♣Q, declarer would have been able to take the losing heart finesse and still get home. Helness avoided this depressing conclusion by unblocking the queen, but Stansby demonstrated that this was not good enough; he cashed his spade trick and crossed to the ♦K to lead a club from dummy. Helgemo could take two club tricks but then had to lead a heart from his king: +600. Those 12 IMPs gave the USA their first lead since Board 4, 260-250.

It's not easy to see even after the fact but Helgemo could have beaten the contract by playing the ♣J on the first round of the suit (the bidding marks declarer with the ♣A). This unusual stratagem allows the defenders to maintain their flexibility in the suit, declarer's line of play dictating which of their hands should win the third round of clubs.

Bd: 117	North		
Dlr: North	♠ 6		
N/S Vul:	♥ 10987		
	♦ AK65		
	♣ A864		
West	East		
♠ 105	♠ KQ8743		
♥ KQ62	♥ AJ		
♦ J1043	♦ 87		
♣ 1053	♣ KQ2		
	South		
	♠ AJ92		
	♥ 543		
	♦ Q92		
	♣ J97		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
	Pass	1♣*	Pass
1♦*	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Dbl	2♠	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2NT(2)
Dbl	Pass(2)	Pass	Pass
(1) Normally a scramble			
(2) No five-card suit			



Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT*	Dbl	Rdbl	2♣(1)
Pass	Pass	2♠	All Pass
(1) Pass would have been for penalty			

Both Norths sensibly passed as dealer, fearing an awkward rebid over a 1♠ response. Conveniently, both were able to double 1NT (takeout of spades) and that really should have been the end of it when East threatened to finish in 2♠ after showing some extra values.

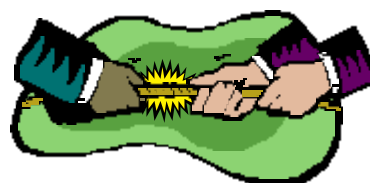
Helness went quietly and Helgemo led the ♥3. Martel played three rounds of hearts to discard a diamond, then led the ♠5 to the king and ace. Helgemo switched to the ♦2 and Helness won the king to play the master heart, declarer ruffing with the eight. Had Helgemo over-ruffed with the nine to play a second diamond the defense would have been in control, but, instead, he discarded the ♣9. Declarer exited with the ♠3 to the jack, ruffed the diamond continuation and led the ♣K to North's ace. A club return would have allowed declarer to win, felling the jack, cash the ♠Q, and lead a club towards the ten. South would get his trump by ruffing or on the last trick. But North played a diamond. Martel scored his last small trump, cashed the ♠Q and the ♣Q, and Helgemo took the last trick with the ♠9: +110.

Weichsel gilded the lily by doubling again, catching Sontag with no eight-card fit. Although 2NT was a scramble, Weichsel's pass over Groetheim's double indicated that there was nowhere to go and Sontag decided to take his chances in 2NT doubled. The lead of the ♠10 was permitted to run to Sontag's jack. A low heart went to the jack and Aa continued with the ♠Q to drive out the ace, dummy discarding a club. Declarer continued hearts and East won the ace to clear spades, West discarding the ♣10 and then the ♣5, dummy both remaining hearts. Running the ♦9 would have brought home the contract (West could not gain by covering), but Sontag played the suit normally to finish one down: -200. 3 IMPs to Norway, 253-260.

Bd: 118	North		
Dlr: East	♠ AK87		
E/W Vul:	♥ AJ10		
	♦ J64		
	♣ 1073		
West		East	
♠ J10652		♠ Q3	
♥ 974		♥ Q65	
♦ 9853		♦ A72	
♣ A		♣ KQJ65	
	South		
	♠ 94		
	♥ K832		
	♦ KQ10		
	♣ 9842		
Open Room/Closed Rom			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
		1NT	Pass
2♥*	Pass	2♠	All Pass

Both Easts declared a quiet 2♠ on transfer sequences. Sontag found the unfortunate lead of the ♣9. Aa won dummy's ace and led a low trump. To defeat the contract Weichsel had to play an honor and shift to either red suit., He followed low, however, and Aa won the queen to play high clubs to discard dummy's hearts. Weichsel ruffed the fourth round with the ♠8 and could not defeat the contract whether or not he cashed a high spade. Declarer would either score enough of dummy's trumps, using the long club to force North, or develop dummy's long diamond; +110.

Helgemo led the ♦K, Helness discouraging a continuation because of his strong heart holding. Helgemo switched to the ♥3 and the defenders took three heart tricks ending in South. A club went to the ace and Helness still had three trump tricks coming for two down: -200. 7 IMPs to Norway, tying the match again at 260, with 10 boards left to play.



Bd: 119	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K108		
All Vul:	♥ KQJ1054		
	♦ J952		
	♣ ---		
West		East	
♠ 754		♠ QJ32	
♥ A		♥ 9873	
♦ KQ864		♦ 73	
♣ KJ96		♣ Q102	
	South		
	♠ A96		
	♥ 62		
	♦ A10		
	♣ A87543		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
			2♣
Pass	3♣(1)	Pass	3♥(2)
All Pass			
(1) Some one-suited invitation (not clubs)			
(2) Accepting diamonds, but not hearts; no reference to spades			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
			1♣
1♦	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥(1)	All Pass	
(1) Forward-going			

4♥ is a very good contract for North/South, but neither pair got there. Groetheim led he ♦K to the ace, and when he won the first trump could have played queen and another diamond to give Aa a useful ruff. He switched to a spade however. Sontag made five: +200.

Martel made the best lead for the defense against 2♥, the ♦7. When West won the ♥A, ♦Q, diamond would have allowed Martel to ruff and exit with a trump, leaving Helness with a minor-suit loser. Stansby switched to the ♣K, however, so Helness lost only two diamond tricks for +170. 1 IMP to USA, ahead 261-260.

North can make 4♥ on a diamond lead, but it's really double dummy. He ducks the diamond

lead to West, wins the diamond return with the ace, ruffs a club low, and leads a spade. East must play an honor and the ace wins. Declarer a *diamond* on the ♣A, ruffs another club, and leads his remaining diamond. If East doesn't ruff, declarer ruffs safely and loses only a spade and the trump ace. If instead East ruffs in, declarer discards a spade from dummy and can't be prevented from ruffing a spade later, losing only to the trump ace in addition.

Bd: 120	North		
Dlr: West	♠ Q10932		
None Vul:	♥ K8		
	♦ Q93		
	♣ 876		
West		East	
♠ ---		♠ J75	
♥ A10643		♥ J95	
♦ J10864		♦ K5	
♣ KJ10		♣ AQ952	
	South		
	♠ AK864		
	♥ Q72		
	♦ A72		
	♣ 43		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
1♥	Pass	4♥	All Pass
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
Pass	Pass	1♣	1♠
2♥	3♠*	Pass	Pass
4♦	Pass	4♥	All Pass

In contrast to the previous deal, both E/W pairs found a way to their thin 4♥. Weichsel led the ♠10 and Groetheim ruffed Sontag's king to lead the ♦4 to the king and ace, misguessing. The defenders played spades at every opportunity and declarer lost control to finish two down: -100.

Helness also led the ♠10 and Stansby ruffed Helgemo's ace, but he continued by passing the ♦10, believing that spades were likely to be five-five and that Helness was therefore an underdog to hold the ♦A for his preemptive

raise. South won the  $\diamond A$  ace and continued spades, but declarer ruffed, crossed to the  $\diamond K$ , and led a trump to the ten and king. He ruffed the third spade with his penultimate trump, and cashed the  $\heartsuit A$ . Although the queen did not drop, Stansby simply ran clubs and dummy still had the  $\heartsuit J$  to control the spades. Helgemo could take only the  $\heartsuit Q$ . Plus+420 for Stansby and 11 IMPs to USA, 272-260.

Although Stansby could have chosen to ask Martel for shortage he preferred to bid his hand naturally. Martel was unable to show the combination of four trumps and a singleton club and in the end, once Martel denied a diamond control, Stansby was unwilling to go past game. Helness led the  $\spadesuit K$  against  $4\heartsuit$  and Stansby cross-ruffed twelve tricks: +680.

On Vugraph Aa/Groetheim reached the fine  $6\heartsuit$  after a three-suited positive response to West's strong club. Weichsel teased the audience by taking a rest break before returning to lead a trump, the killer. Had clubs been four-three or hearts two-two Weichsel's lead would not have mattered (with trumps two-two declarer can survive the five-two club break by eliminating spades, ruffing three clubs, drawing a second trump, and endplaying South with the fifth club to led from the  $\diamond K$ ), but here it made all the difference. Weichsel took trick 13 by trumping declarer's  $\diamond A$  with the last trump in the game for one down: -100.

USA gained 13 IMPs, extending the lead to 25, 285-260. Had Weichsel found a different lead, Norway would have gained 13 IMPs to take a 1-IMP lead (273-272), so there were 26 IMPs riding on the outcome of Board 22.

It's not often that a particular deal can be accurately described as the match-breaker, but this one had all the elements. There were only six deals remaining. As it happened, there wasn't much life in them, although . . .

Bd: 122	North		
Dlr: East	$\spadesuit$ KQ86		
All Vul:	$\heartsuit$ 972		
	$\diamond$ J1092		
	$\clubsuit$ K9		
West		East	
$\spadesuit$ 9		$\spadesuit$ AJ107	
$\heartsuit$ AKQ106		$\heartsuit$ J854	
$\diamond$ A4		$\diamond$ Q765	
$\clubsuit$ A10542		$\clubsuit$ 7	
	South		
	$\spadesuit$ 5432		
	$\heartsuit$ 3		
	$\diamond$ K83		
	$\clubsuit$ QJ863		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Groetheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
		Pass	Pass
1 $\clubsuit$ *	Pass	2NT(1)	Pass
3 $\clubsuit$ (2)	Pass	3 $\diamond$ (3)	Pass
3 $\heartsuit$ (4)	Pass	3NT(5)	Pass
6 $\heartsuit$	All Pass		
(1) 4=4=4=1, 8-10 HCP			
(2) Ace ask			
(3) One ace			
(4) King ask			
(5) No kings			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgemo</i>
		Pass	Pass
1 $\heartsuit$	Pass	2 $\clubsuit$ (1)	Pass
3 $\clubsuit$ (2)	Pass	3 $\heartsuit$ (3)	Pass
4 $\clubsuit$	Pass	4 $\heartsuit$	All Pass
(1) Drury (Fit)			
(2) Slam try, natural			
(3) Slam-suitable hand			

Bd: 125	North		
Dlr: North	$\spadesuit$ 764		
All Vul:	$\heartsuit$ ---		
	$\diamond$ AK109643		
	$\clubsuit$ AKJ		
West		East	
$\spadesuit$ Q10832		$\spadesuit$ AK5	
$\heartsuit$ 10985		$\heartsuit$ J632	
$\diamond$ 872		$\diamond$ QJ5	
$\clubsuit$ 7		$\clubsuit$ 1053	
	South		
	$\spadesuit$ J9		
	$\heartsuit$ AKQ74		
	$\diamond$ ---		
	$\clubsuit$ Q98642		

Open Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Grotheim</i>	<i>Weichsel</i>	<i>Aa</i>	<i>Sontag</i>
	1♣*	Pass	2♣
Pass	2NT(1)	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♣	Pass	4♥
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♣

All Pass

(1) Diamonds

Closed Room

West	North	East	South
<i>Stansby</i>	<i>Helness</i>	<i>Martel</i>	<i>Helgermo</i>
	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	3♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	3NT	All Pass	

Sontag accurately depicted his six-five after Weichsel's strong club opening, and the auction seemed to be under control, Weichsel's 5♣ suggesting that he did not have a spade control. Thus it was not particularly unlikely for Sontag that the strong club opening left the hand with the ace-king of spades on lead against 6♣: -100.

That opened the door for Norway to eat up a chunk of the American's 26-IMP lead, but...it's not easy to reach 5♣ if no one bids the suit. Martel led the ♠A against Helness' 3NT and the defenders took their spades for one down: -100. No swing after all.

The Americans won the final segment 49-26 and won the 2001 Bermuda Bowl by 21 IMPs, 286-265. **Rose Meltzer** (the first woman to win the Bermuda Bowl -- and on her birthday, to boot), **Kyle Larsen**. **Alan Sontag/Peter Weichsel**, **Chip Martel/Lew Stansby**, npc **Jan Martel** and coaches **Fred Gitelman/Sheri Winestock** were champions of the world.

C/O	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	
Norway	1	54	37	40	32	28	3	44	26	265
USA2		27	18	14	26	69	41	42	49	286

In the Playoff for third place (48 deals), Poland started 4.3 IMPs behind Italy but won each of the three sets quite narrowly to earn the Bronze medals with an 86-74.3 victory.

**Venice Cup (96 deals)**

France started +5.5 and delivered a strong first set, continuing the good work in the second. But then Germany stemmed the tide in the third set and roared back in the fourth to close to within 11 IMPs. The French players regrouped and pulled away again in the fifth set. With 16 deals remaining, France led by 47 IMPs, and the Vugraph theatre had to be expanded to accommodate the throng of French supporters on hand to celebrate the impending victory of their heroines.

As it went there was little for them to cheer about. Going into the penultimate deal France had scored only 2 IMPs while Germany had racked up 41 of their own, thanks to some enterprising bidding and play. The French lead had been reduced to just 8 IMPs.

Bd: 95	North		
Dlr: South	♠ K		
N/S Vul:	♥ AQ105		
	♦ AQ108		
	♣ 9843		
West		East	
♠ AJ8765		♠ 103	
♥ 8		♥ J7632	
♦ J97		♦ 62	
♣ J107		♣ AKQ2	
	South		
	♠ Q942		
	♥ K94		
	♦ K543		
	♣ 65		
Open Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Bessis</i>	<i>Auken</i>	<i>d'Ovidio</i>	<i>v Arnim</i>
			Pass
2♠	Dbl	Pass	3♦(1)
Pass	3♠	Pass	3NT
All Pass			
(1) Constructive			
Closed Room			
<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
<i>Rauscheid</i>	<i>Cronier</i>	<i>Nehmert</i>	<i>Willard</i>
			Pass
2♠	Dbl	Pass	3♦
All Pass			

**Sylvie Willard's** 3♦ did not suggest positive values, so it was clear for **Benedicte Cronier** to pass. **Andrea Rauscheid** led the ♡8 around to the nine and Willard drew trumps: +130. As 3♦ is the best spot for North/South, this result appeared to be favorable for France, offering genuine hope for at worst a flat board and a chance to carry that fragile lead into the final deal.

It didn't turn out that way.

**Daniela von Arnim** believed that she had slightly too much for a "weakness" response of 2NT (lebensohl-style). 3♦ was constructive, so **Sabine Auken**, with a good diamond fit, a potential source of tricks in hearts, and something in reserve, tried for 3NT with a 3♠ cue-bid. Bingo!

Had **Veronique Bessis** led the ♣J, the French supporters would have raised the roof in the Vugraph theatre, but she started the ♠7, not reasonably, king, ten, low. Declarer cashed the ♦A, led the ♦8 to her king, and a third round to dummy's queen, d'Ovidio parting with the ♡2, a revealing play with four hearts visible in dummy. Von Arnim was well on her way to getting the hearts right at this point and might well have cashed a heart honor while her communications in diamonds remained fluid, catering to singleton jack in West. Instead she cashed the ♦10, d'Ovidio discarding the ♣2, Bessis the ♠5. Now von Arnim had to lead a heart to her nine to make her contract, and this she did, playing the percentages (West was known to hold six spades, three diamonds, at least one club (no double or club bid by East) and East would not have discarded a heart from four). The ♡9 held: +600. For a moment there was a joint gasp of despair from the French supporters, a bit more noticeable than the joyous "yes" from the German fans, but then came polite applause, recognition for a job well done. It was one of the more poignant moments in the exciting history of Vugraph presentations.

10 IMPs to Germany, now ahead by 2, 218-216. The last deal provided an opportunity. It was an aggressive 3NT that could be beaten with the right opening lead from a yarborough. Both E/W pairs bid the close game and neither

North found the killing lead, so Germany hung on to win the Venice Cup, completing a storybook comeback.

	C/O	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
France	5.5	76	27	15	29	61	2	215.5
Germany		36	15	23	68	25	51	218

Austria carried forward 5.5 IMPs against USA2 in the Playoff for third place (48 boards), but the Americans claimed the Bronze medals by winning all three sets en route to a convincing 165-110.5 victory.

## THE SENIORS BOWL

Eight teams (Australia, an original qualifier, was unable to attend) participated, engaging in a double Round Robin, followed by 48-board semifinals and final.

Round Robin Rankings:

1	USA1	274
2	France	250
3	Poland	236
4	USA2	229
5	Italy	223
6	Guadeloupe	200
7	Egypt/South Africa	160
8	Bahrain	74

USA1 (**Fred Hamilton/John Sutherlin, Steve Robinson/Kit Woolsey, Dan Morse/Bobby Wolff; npc Betty Ann Kennedy**), which included most of the members of the winning Seniors team at the Maastricht Olympiad, won the Round Robin with a solid performance but had to face dangerous USA2 (**Garey Hayden/John Onstott, Joe Kivel/Chris Larsen, Grant Baze/Gene Freed**) in the semifinals. The Conditions of Contest precluded teams from the same country meeting in the final.

That left the two strong teams from France (**Pierre Adad/Maurice Aujaleu, Francois Leenhardt/Christian Mari, Claude Delmouly/(Jean-Marc Roudinesco); Yves Aubrey, npc**) and Poland (**Stefan Szenberg/Andrzej Wilkosz/ Wlodzimier Wala, Wit Klapper/Jerzy Russyan, (Andrzej Milde); Wlodzimierz Stobiecki, npc**) to fight it out in the other semifinal.

USA2 upset USA1 100-78 while Poland defeated France 80-54. In the final, USA2 maintained perspective and conquered Poland 108-72 to earn the title. In the 32-board Bronze medal Playoff, France soundly defeated USA1 105.3-61.

## WORLD TRANSNATIONAL TEAMS

74 teams entered the third edition of this popular event. They competed in a 15-round Swiss, with the top four qualifying for 32-board semifinals, the winners going on to the 48-board final.

Final Rankings in Swiss:

1 Bureau (France) .....	278
2 Grinberg (Israel) .....	277
3 Brachman (USA/Brazil) .....	262
4 Kowalski (Poland) .....	260

The Swiss winners, **Bureau (Cyril Bureau, Daniele Gaviard, Patrick Sussel, Philip Selz, Vanessa Reess)** chose runnerup **Grinberg**, the Israeli Bermuda Bowl team (**Ilan & Ofir Herbst, Doron & Israel Yadlin, Michael Barel/Yoram Aviram; Nir Grinberg, npc**) and defeated them 67-51.3.

That decision left **Brachman (Geoff Hampson/Eddie Wold, Mike Passell/Michael Seamon, Diego Brenner/Gabriel Chagas; Malcolm Brachman, npc)** to face the fierce Polish team **Kowalski (Apolinary Kowalski/Jacek Romanski, Piotr Tuszynski/Marek Szymanowski)**. Brachman won 85-49 in a match that figured to be much closer.

The underdog Bureau team had tremendous support from their countrymen but Brachman's experienced stars were not to be denied, winning the final convincingly, 120-49. Third place went to Grinberg, who had fared better than Kowalski in the Swiss. Rounding out the top ten were:

5 Zimmerman(France): Mouiel/Levy/Saporta/Moretti) .....	258
6 Courtney (GB): Burn/Brock/Wigoder .....	257
7 Reid (NZ): Jedrychowski/Mayer/Cornell .....	257
8 Ventin (Spain/Italy): Lantaron/Torres/ Frances/Buratti/Lanzarotti .....	255
9 Chang (USA/GB): Wolff/Rosenberg/ Mahmood/Robson/Forrester .....	251
10 Jagniewski (Poland/Germany): Pazur/Gotard/Piekarek .....	251

*[Last year I wrote an article entitled A Question of Alerting for my local bridge unit bulletin in which I discussed the ACBL's Alert Procedure and the problem of unauthorized information which can arise from this procedure. Shortly after the article appeared, a letter from a local reader, a Flight B player, questioned the advice I had given. I subsequently wrote a response for him which is scheduled to appear in our local bulletin in the near future Since my original advice, the letter challenging it and my subsequent reply may be of interest to readers here in Japan, I am reproducing them here in the hope that they will prove both enlightening and of interest. First, the original article...]*

## A Question of Alerting

by Rich Colker

Among the most common questions I am asked are those relating to the Alert procedure. These often involve the ethics and the mechanics of Alerting, the information conveyed by an Alert (or a failure to Alert) and the proper way to deal with the events which follow.

It will be helpful in what follows to keep in mind several things. First, the purpose of the Alert procedure is to inform the opponents that a call

has been made which has a hidden meaning or implication of which they may not be aware. Second, neither of the players on the Alerting side is entitled to "hear" the Alert nor is a player on a side which has failed to Alert entitled to "not hear" the Alert. Third, the laws prohibit a player from basing any call or play upon information gained from partner's answer to an opponent's question. (You are allowed to "hear" the question itself, however.) Fourth, you are

required by law to correct (at the appropriate time and in the proper manner) any misinformation which might have been caused by an inappropriate Alert or failure to Alert. And fifth, proper ethical conduct begins with you recognizing your responsibility to act accordingly. Let's examine each of these points more closely.

The opponents are entitled to all of the information which you and your partner have regarding what your bids mean (or imply). Law 40B states: "A player may not make a call or play based on a special partnership understanding unless an opposing pair may reasonably be expected to understand its meaning..." Often, the only way you can convey such information is through an Alert.

Suppose, for example, your 1♦ response to your partner's 1♣ opening denies a five-card major and otherwise says nothing about diamonds. It is Alertable. How else can the opponents reasonably be expected to know that you could hold a singleton or a doubleton diamond for your call? Similarly, if the auction proceeds:

You	LHO	Pard	RHO
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♣
Pass			

and you play Support Doubles (a double of 2♣ by you at your second turn would have shown three-card spade support), your pass of 2♣ must be Alerted. In this case the pass itself is not a special convention or treatment but your failure to double has hidden implications. (You could not have made a penalty double and you probably do not have three-card spade support—at least not that you wished to show.)

Now suppose you hold ♠Qxx ♥Axx ♦KQxx ♣Jxx and the auction goes as above. Partner Alerts your pass of 2♣ which reminds you that you are playing Support Doubles. LHO passes and partner now bids 2♦ which is passed back to you. Should you bid 2♠? Absolutely not! Alerts are for the opponents' ears and their ears only. You are not permitted to "hear" your partner's Alert in the sense that you may not take advantage of the information which it contains. Since you obviously forgot that you could make a Support Double and since equally

clearly partner's Alert awakened you to that fact, you may not now take advantage of your newly found knowledge. You must act as though partner had not Alerted your pass and go quietly.

What would happen if you did bid 2♠ and that ended the auction. If partner showed up with ♠Axxxx ♥x ♦Axxx ♣xxx and both 2♠ and 2♦ make three (with the ♠Kx onside) you would not be allowed to keep your good result. The opponents would call the Director who would rule the contract back to 2♦ making three (+110 for the opponents). In addition, if you are an experienced player who the Director judges should have known better than to take advantage of the unauthorized information he could also assess a procedural penalty against you (1/4 board at matchpoints or 3 imps at teams) for taking improper advantage. In addition, if you are so foolish as to appeal the ruling the Appeals Committee should find your appeal to be without merit and penalize you again for your failure to learn your lesson. And if there is evidence of a history of such actions on your part a Conduct and Ethics Committee might even be convened which could impose an even more severe punishment. The possibilities include a probationary period or even a suspension.

And what if you bid 2♠ and caught your partner with ♠xxxx ♥Kx ♦AJxx ♣xxx and the opponents lead the ♠A and a spade through your queen-third drawing trumps in four rounds. They then cash five club tricks for down four—a cold bottom! In that case you would keep your poor result and you could still be subject to a more severe punishment from a C&E Committee. Crime doesn't pay.

Suppose you hold ♠AJx ♥Kx ♦AQxxx ♣xxx and the auction proceeds:

You	LHO	Pard	RHO
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♣
Dbl*	Pass	2♠	Pass
?			

\*Not Alerted

The failure to Alert your double is a sure sign that this partner has forgotten that you are playing Support Doubles. Therefore, partner has pulled what he believed to be your "penalty" double of 2♣ back to spades. If he holds

something like ♠Q10xxxx ♥Qxx ♦Kxx ♣x or ♠0xxxxxx ♥Qxx ♦Kxx ♣---, 4♠ could be cold. Even if he produces some miserable holding such as ♠Q10xxxx ♥Qxx ♦Jx ♣xx he would have to be quite unlucky to go down at the three level. If a raise to 3♠ seems appropriate to you—wrong! If partner had Alerted your double you could raise (at your own risk). However, his failure to Alert makes the raise even more attractive and with that information present the law says you may not chose “...from among logical alternative actions one that could demonstrably have been suggested over another...” (Laws 16A and 73F) by the unauthorized information. As before, any attempt to do so should at least lead to a score adjustment and possibly to a disciplinary penalty as well.

What about if an opponent asks a question about one or more of your bids? Can't you use partner's answer to help you clarify the auction that follows? Absolutely not! Information from the answer to an opponent's question is unauthorized to the side providing it. You are entitled to hear the question and use the opponent's interest in the answer to your advantage. And you may also hear the answer in case you need to correct any misinformation partner may have given to the opponents (but you must wait until your first legal opportunity—the end of the auction for the declaring side, the end of the hand for the defenders—to make the correction). Consider the following. You pick up ♠KQxxx ♥KQx ♦Axxx ♣K and the auction proceeds:

You	Pard	Your Interpretation	Pard's Interpretation
1♠	2♦		
3♦	4♥	4♥ = splinter	4♥ = ace asking (the suit above the agreed minor)
5♦	5♥	5♦ = signoff 5♥ = cue (void or sing A)	5♦ = two key cards with the ♦Q 5♥ = Grand Slam try (like 5NT)
5NT	6♣	5NT = ♥ wastage, no ♠A 6♣ = further GS try	5NT = both major suit kings 6♣ = GS try
?			

Your interpretations of the meanings of the various bids are given above. In general, they show that originally partner's splinter bid turned you off. Now, however, you are becoming more optimistic in light of partner's persistence. You have good king-queen combinations in both majors, considering your denial of both of those aces, and your ♣K and ruffing value (with four trumps) are absolutely golden.

At this point RHO begins asking partner about the auction. Partner's interpretations, revealed by his answers to RHO's questions, are also shown. In general, you and partner have been in two different galaxies. He intended 4♥ as ace asking (Redwood or Kickback) and you showed an ace and the queen of trumps *more* than you have! True, you do have both major suit kings but that cannot make up for the previous round of the auction. You may even be overboard already. Well, what do you do?

By now you should have the hang of what is expected of you. You must bid as though

partner's bids meant exactly what you thought they did all along. The information you have to the contrary has come from an unauthorized source. You are not permitted to “hear” it and certainly not permitted to act upon it. It does not matter who, you or your partner, is correct about the meanings of the various calls. All that matters is that you are not entitled to know that your interpretation is not partner's, just as if that knowledge came from partner's huddle or his inappropriate comment during the auction. It is unlawful and unethical for you to use it. You must therefore go ahead and bid the grand (7♦).

Let's try another example. You open 2♦ and partner Alerts and explains your bid as Flannery. The only problem is that you are not playing Flannery with this partner. He has you confused with one of his other partners (who, at this point, you wish was sitting precisely where you are). When and how should you correct this misinformation? First, you should do nothing during the auction. Any attempt by you to correct the opponents' wrong impression will also



correct partner's wrong impression, which is illegal. Second, should you become the declaring side (declarer or dummy) you should immediately call the Director and explain what happened. The Director will then determine when and how the opponents should be appraised of the error. Should you become a defender you should do nothing until the play of the hand ends. At that point you should call the Director and proceed as above.

What if partner becomes aware of his own mistake at some time during the hand? He should immediately notify the Director (it does not matter whether he is declaring or defending) and again should proceed as above.

What if partner's explanation was correct and it is you who has forgotten what you are playing? (I know that's impossible but try to imagine it, just for the sake of this discussion.) In this case there has been no infraction. The opponents have been given an accurate explanation of your agreement and partner is in the same boat as the opponents regarding your actual hand. You should make no attempt to correct partner's explanation (which is correct as it stands) nor should you try to notify the Director (there's nothing to notify him about). The opponents are not entitled to know your hand or that you have misbid. They are only entitled to know your

*[Now here's the letter...]*

Dear Mr. Colker,

I have just read your column A Question of Alerting and I wish to explain why I believe you are wrong. But first I want to tell you why it is important. I'm an intermediate player who, after 30 years, has accumulated 250 points. I play occasionally in the Thursday unit game (even though it's a stratified game and several of you "experts" go out of your way to make me feel unwelcome). I want to play in strict accordance with the rules but several experts have gone too far in finding UI in failures to Alert and, as in your example, Alerting incorrectly. You ignore the fact that most of us try to play honestly and you are much too quick to impose restrictions or penalties when there may be only a one-in-a-million chance that the UI was used improperly or that the opponents were damaged by its use.

bidding agreements. Any attempt by you to inform them can only serve to inform partner as well, which is illegal. In both of the above cases you know, from partner's answers to the opponents' questions, that your actions have been misinterpreted. That knowledge is unauthorized to you and you must be careful not to base your subsequent actions on it. Remember, Alerts are for the opponents only. You must make all of your calls and plays as you would have had there been no Alert procedure in effect. That is, you must bid and play as if partner had taken the correct action at each step of the hand—either Alerted when he should have or not Alerted when there was nothing to Alert. In most cases it is clear to an experienced Director or Committee when a player has made improper use of unauthorized information. There are few times when a culprit is able to avoid detection.

Nevertheless, the fear of being caught must not be the primary motivation for avoiding improper actions. Rather, a desire to adhere to the highest standards of conduct should be your personal goal. It is important that we all assume personal responsibility for conduct the game under the highest ethical standards and we should expect nothing less from everyone involved in the game.

For someone like me, a player with seriously impaired vision whose partner often "hesitates" only because it takes her longer than you experts to figure out the correct bid, that creates problems. It's bad enough that I can't see the dummy and have to memorize it, or that opponents fail to call their cards as I've requested so that I have to guess what card they have played. But now I also have to be intimidated by trying not to take unfair advantage of my partner's hesitations, her failures to Alert, or the knowledge that my Alert may have told her that her bid actually meant something other than what she thought it meant. My point is, let's make the rules sensible and not ridiculous; you lean so far backward that you fall over.

Now to your example, which I will deal with on two levels. The situation you described is as follows. I open 1♦ holding ♠Qxx ♥Axx ♦KQxx ♣Jxx. The auction then goes:

Me	LHO	Pard	RHO
1♦	Pass	1♠	2♣
Pass*	Pass	2♦	Pass
?			

\*Alerted by my partner as “shows two spades or less”

*Scenario 1:* I know perfectly well we are playing support doubles but, although my partner and I have never discussed it, I decide this is a good time to pass. Our methods are: We play five-card majors; we try to respond with 5-7 HCP and a four-card major (since opener could have a balanced hand with 19 HCP); we try to play support doubles even though we know we are likely to come to grief. Over RHO's 2♣ a double shows three or four spades but keeps my hand unlimited while a pass gives my partner (at least for us weak players) more useful information (that I opened with a bare minimum and I almost certainly do not have four spades). What's wrong with that?

I choose to pass and now my partner balances with 2♦; RHO passes. You say I absolutely may not bid 2♠ and, indeed, if I get a good result it will be denied me. I may receive a ¼-board penalty and, if I appeal, I may even get a second penalty. Nonsense. My thinking is this. We probably don't have a game. We have an eight-card diamond fit but we may also have eight spades. It's matchpoints. Why shouldn't I be allowed to play bridge and take a chance on bidding 2♠? If the opponents bid 3♣ my partner should be able to decide whether to pass or compete in either diamonds or spades.

*[And finally, the reply...]*

## What's the Harm? A Reply

by Rich Colker

### Matters of Courtesy:

Before I get to the matter of UI, I wish to address some of the courtesy issues raised in the reader's letter. Players who *go out of their*

Look again at your definition of a support double. You say it might mean that I have three spades that I don't care to show. My partner Alerted and said “We play support doubles so his failure to double means he has two or less spades,” but since I can use my judgment and not double with three spades perhaps it was my partner who Alerted incorrectly, which may or may not mislead the opponents. So I have to have the right to scrupulously adhere to our system and bid 2♠. My result stands. I do not get penalized even once, much less twice.

*Scenario 2:* Now let's suppose I forgot that we're playing support doubles. Now I'm aware (although you say I must pretend I didn't hear the Alert) that my partner and the opponents think I have two or one spade. (With a void I would probably have bid again.) When 2♦ is passed back to me I reason as follows: I did not hear the Alert. This is matchpoints and I'd like to chance playing in 2♠ with a seven- or eight-card fit rather than in an eight-card diamond fit. Moreover, the UI I have is pretty trivial. The other players all think I have one or two spades. What will they think if I now bid 2♠? They will think either: (a) “The damn fool forgot he is playing support doubles. Since he surely would not have passed with four spades he must have three.” or (b) “He may have two spades that are very good, say ace-king or ace-queen.”

If I now bid 2♠, have I taken improper advantage of the trivial UI that I had? How have my opponents been damaged? They might say that they thought we didn't have a spade fit and if they had known we might have a four-three or five-three fit they would have bid (or played) differently. Come on!

Respectfully,  
(name withheld)

way to make others feel unwelcome are in violation of Law 74A. Speaking to the Director may help if the player is being outright discourteous, but sometimes the problem is

they are simply not being as sociable, friendly or gracious as we would like. As bitter a pill as it may be for some to take, we must realize that it is not possible to force everyone to conform to our own personal standards of friendliness and sociability. It can be just as much of an imposition if a player tries to force a shy, withdraw, or unhappy opponent to smile and act friendly as it is for him to try to cope with a morose or unsociable opponent. Bridge tournaments are social events in which we will always encounter differences in personal styles. We must be prepared to tolerate these—unless the person is being overtly offensive. If the opponents seem particularly cold or distant, a compliment (especially related to their bridge), a joke or a kidding remark can sometimes help to break the ice. But if that isn't *your* style (or it doesn't produce an improvement) you may just have to deal with it.

The problem of an opponent not calling out his cards (or speaking his bids) when asked politely by a visually impaired player is a more serious one. If this is done intentionally, it is a violation of Law (74A) and calling the Director is the best way to deal with it. However, we must bear in mind that bidding and playing, for most players, is a highly automated and reflexive process. We cannot expect players to seamlessly adapt to the unnatural and unfamiliar act of speaking their bids and/or plays at a moment's notice. Lapses will occur. When they do I recommend a polite reminder ("I'm sorry, I didn't catch what you said" or "Your card is the...what?") to stimulate their memory. You might also ask your partner at the start of the session to offer to call the opponents' bids and/or plays for them if they think they'll forget, or if they'd rather not do it themselves, or if, after trying it for a while, there are still too many repeated lapses.

### **Matters of Law:**

If you play a social game of chess with a friend, you can play by whatever rules you agree are fair. You can pick up a piece, hold it in different board positions while considering various possible moves, and replace it in its original position and proceed to move a different piece. You can move a piece, release it, and before your friend has spent too much time thinking about his next move (after all, one can impose

too much, even on a friend) ask to take your move back. Your friend will likely say "Sure." But if you enter a chess tournament, everything changes. If you touch a piece and later change your mind about moving it, that's too bad. Chess tournaments are "touch move": touch it and you must move it. And once you release a piece there are no "take backs." Unfriendly? Unsocial? Maybe.

Sound familiar? Bridge is no different. Perhaps it should be, but the rigor of the game still depends on where you play and with whom. Play at home, with a group of friends for fun, and the rules are whatever you all agree is fair. Table talk, thinking out loud, no lengthy thinking,...whatever. When you play at your local club the rules are stricter (though *how* strict is up to the club owner or manager), but probably not as strict as in the Blue Ribbon Pairs. But play in any ACBL tournament (including our local unit games) and the rules become equivalent to "touch move." That's just how it is.

It would be nice if the ACBL provided "relaxed," socially-oriented tournament games for those who don't wish to play in a cutthroat environment. But the sad fact is they do not. (David Silber, the ex-ACBL CEO, and I submitted a proposal last year to run relaxed-rules games at all levels, even NABCs. This is currently "under consideration" by the ACBL Board of Directors—but take my advice and don't hold your breath.) So if you enter a bridge (or chess) tournament, you must be prepared to play "by the rules." Of course in bridge it is still up to each individual player to decide when and if to call a Director if an opponent commits an irregularity or infraction. But everyone is perfectly within his rights to play "touch move," in strict accordance with the rules. If you find yourself complaining about other players playing strictly by the rules, and you'd rather avoid the pressure of the tournament game, don't blame your opponents. The blame, if there is any, is your own (and the ACBL's for not running more socially-oriented games along side their regular ones). If you want your "druthers," stick to club games where the atmosphere is more social and the rules more relaxed.

The rules are what they are. No small group of

“experts” (including many players who are decidedly non-experts, if we use the term strictly) can go “too far” in finding UI behind every rock. It is the Director’s job to enforce the rules as they are written and intended. No player, given a competent Director, should be allowed to impose his own views in contradiction to what the rules provide. The information on laws and regulations which I provide in this column is, in most cases, not just my own personal view but the ACBL’s as well. (I always try to label my personal views as personal, and state what the officially-sanctioned position is so you know the difference.) So in my article, when I described what the rules on UI are, those were not just my own views but the ones followed by the ACBL in all of its tournaments. You and I may not like those rules but they are what they are: the rules. If they seem too harsh for the typical player or appear selectively unfair to weaker players (I tend to agree with the former assertion but not the latter), then the fault is not with “several experts” but with the lawmakers.

The rules are intended to make the game as fair as possible and provide a level playing field for what is, in the final analysis, a competitive event. Players who try to obey the rules and play honestly and fairly will, as surely as the sun will rise tomorrow (even if we cannot see it through the clouds, snow or rain), infract one or more of those rules during the session. UI will occur, for example, whenever a player bids more quickly or slowly than normal, and no one who is not an automaton can maintain an absolutely even tempo at all times. Once UI occurs (and it *will* occur), the player in receipt of it must take an action, and in many cases that will be open to question (it will have, as they say, a “logical alternative”). If the action taken was suggested by the UI, then it is possible that it won’t be allowed unless the player can show that it was dictated by his system or was clear-cut from the authorized information available when he bid. This is not, as it may seem, an issue of honesty or dishonesty, it’s an issue of fairness. Not being clairvoyant, none of us can know whether the action *was* influenced by the UI. In fact, even the player himself cannot know for sure if the UI influenced his action in some unconscious way. If the UI *could* have influenced the action, and a good result is

thereby obtained, the rules say the score cannot be allowed to stand.

If you listen closely, I’m sure you’ll hear the writer of the letter saying, “But why do the laws assume the player used the UI? Force the *opponents* to prove he used it. Don’t change the score just because it’s *possible* he used it.” Well, there are three reasons why the laws don’t use this approach. The first, and in some ways the most important, is that this would place the players in a highly undesirable *adversarial* relationship. One side would be forced to accuse the other of using UI rather than simply pointing out that UI was present which “could” have suggested the winning action. The second reason is that it’s virtually impossible to *prove* that UI influenced a player’s action. Which brings us to the third and final reason: The end result of adopting this approach would be that players who are inclined to push the envelope with “shady” or borderline behavior (hesitations and “reads”) would have a marked advantage over ethically honest players. The game would evolve into one where victory would go to the pair that comes closest to cheating without being too blatant about it. This is clearly not the sort of game most of us want bridge to become.

### **Support Doubles:**

In addressing the letter writer’s concerns about UI, I’ll begin with brief discussion of Support Doubles since some of his ideas about how they are played are at odds with standard usage. A Support Double shows exactly three-card support for responder’s suit (never four-cards) and does not place any limits on opener’s strength. Also, Support Doubles do not show or deny other specific features of opener’s hand unless considerations of bidding effectiveness dictate otherwise. For example, let’s change the auction slightly to 1♦-Pass-1♠-2♥. Now consider these two hands: (A) ♠Qxx ♥x ♦AKJxx ♣Qxxx; (B) ♠xxx ♥x ♦AKQJxx ♣AQx. While hand A is well-suited for a Support Double, I would not consider doubling with hand B. To see why you shouldn’t double with hand B, ask yourself “What is it most important that I tell partner about my hand?” Clearly telling him about your source of tricks for a possible 3NT contract (by bidding 3♦ immediately) is far more important than telling him about your weak three-card spade support. If you bid 3♦ partner

will bid 3NT with ♠Kxxx ♥Qxx ♦xx ♣Kxxx, while if you double he'll probably sign off in 2♠. If he has a constructive, spade-oriented hand such as ♠AQxxx ♥xxx ♦xx Kxx he'll make a further move over your extra-value showing 3♦ bid (such as 3♥), at which point you can show your spade support with 3♠ and reach the good 4♠ game.

Another problem with doubling 2♥ with hand B is that LHO may bid 3♥. If this is passed back to you how will you convey your hand's trick-taking potential? You'd like to tell partner to bid 3NT with a heart stopper but there's no way to do it over 3♥. The best you can do is double again, but your hand is not defensively oriented and rebidding diamonds takes you past 3NT.

Change hand B to ♠Qxx ♥x ♦AQJxxx ♣AQx, giving it less trick-taking potential and more prominent spade support (making spades more likely to be where the hand should be played), and you should double 2♥. If LHO bids 3♥ and partner passes this back to you, you can double again to show your extra values. The principle here is: make the bid over RHO's intervention which conveys the most important aspect of your hand. When you have several things to tell partner of approximately equal importance (e.g., three-card spade support, long diamonds, extra values), start with the one you can show most economically (usually the Support Double) and show the other features later.

As I said earlier, a pass by opener in a situation where a double would be Support does not show or deny any particular strength. To see why, consider the original auction: 1♦-Pass-1♠-2♣. What would you bid over 2♣ holding (C) ♠x ♥AKQx ♦AKxx ♣xxxx or (D) ♠Qx ♥AKJx ♦AQxxx ♣xx? You can't double 2♠ in either case since that shows three-card spade support, nor can you bid 2♦ on a four-card suit with C or such a weak suit with D. A 2♥ bid is also out of the question with both hands since you're undervalued for a reverse and have the wrong shape (you can't be confident of finding a safe place to play if you force partner to bid again). So a pass can't deny extra values since it may be your only viable option with some very good hands. And since a Support Double is the right bid with the original hand they cannot even guarantee anything extra.

So to recap, a Support Double shows three-card support for partner's suit and says nothing about opener's hand other than that it is the most descriptive call available. If opener passes or makes another minimum-range bid (such as 2♦ over RHO's 2♣) he's unlikely to have three-card support since with a minimum hand showing the major-suit support is of primary importance. However, a bid which shows extra strength (such as 3♦ over RHO's 2♣) may conceal three-card support if the support is a secondary feature of the hand.

### **Matters of Alerting and UI:**

Now that we're on the same page on Support Doubles, we can more effectively address the letter writer's concerns about UI. In his Scenario 1, passing 2♣ with a hand that's suited to a Support Double is a no-win proposition. Passing risks missing your spade fit and the chance to successfully outbid the opponents for the partscore. It even risks missing a good 4♠ game. For example, if partner balances with 2♠ over 2♣ will you raise? If you do partner may show up with ♠KJxxx ♥xx ♦x ♣Kxxx and you'll go down on either the expected club lead (and ruff) or a heart lead. If you pass partner may show up with ♠AJ10xxx ♥Kx ♦Jxx ♣xx and 4♠ will make with the help of the spade finesse. The other danger in passing is that LHO may bid 3♣, in which case partner will not know whether to compete or, if he does, what suit (diamonds or spades) to compete in. If he bids 3♦ will you "guess" to bid 3♠? What if 3♣ is passed back around to you? Will you guess to bid 3♠ and risk a huge set in a weak four-three spade fit (possibly doubled) when you could have gone plus in diamonds or by defending? Passing is singles, not partnership bridge. It is masterminding the hand by choosing to guess what to do on your own when you could easily have doubled 2♠ and allowed partner to make an *informed* decision.

The letter writer then asks "Why shouldn't I be allowed to play bridge and take a chance on bidding 2♠?" In addition to the above answer, once partner Alerts you are not really taking the chance you think you are. Partner's Alert reduces the risk in bidding 2♠ and tilts the odds in your favor. If partner thought you might hold three spades he would be more likely to compete with 2♠ on a five-card suit. But once he thinks you cannot have three spades he will

often compete in diamonds—perhaps even with only three of them—even though he holds five spades. Thus, bidding 2♠ rates to gain any time partner has five or more spades or (only) three diamonds, both of which are more likely after his Alert.

Now with all of those reasons for making a Support Double to show your spade support and none for passing and playing singles, why should the opponents, the Director or a Committee believe that you *chose* to bid this way and weren't awakened to your agreement by partner's Alert? And even more to the point, no one but you—and maybe not even you—can know for sure whether you forgot you were playing Support Doubles or you simply “decided” not to make one, no matter what you say. The laws *require* the Director or an Appeal Committee to assume that any UI may have been responsible for your action unless you can produce convincing *evidence* otherwise. Since the bridge logic is clear that you would have made a Support Double if you remembered one was available, and since it is illogical to pass and guess later, the presumption is that you forgot, were awakened by partner's Alert, and then belatedly “told” partner that you really had support by bidding 2♠. Thus, whether this was intentional or not, the UI from his Alert influenced your action. You can't prove otherwise, and you can't be permitted to keep your good result. You could even be penalized if you had enough experience or expertise to have known better and your actions are judged flagrant.

Note that the only issue the Director will concern himself with here is whether you can defend your actions with hard evidence (such as system notes) or sound bridge logic. “I just chose to pass and then take my chances on bidding 2♠” won't cut it when a double a round earlier (if you remembered it) would have solved your problem without any guessing. This is not to say that by ruling against you the Director is calling you a liar or implying that you cheated. The laws require him to rule against *any* player who had UI, took an action that was suggested by that UI, and who can present no compelling bridge reason for his actions. To do otherwise would be an open invitation for players to take unfair advantage of extraneous

information from their partners.

Is the use of UI here the “one-in-a-million” chance the letter writer claimed? Hardly. At a typical NABC, UI like this happens an untold number of times. And this is not an obscure situation that only involves Support Doubles. That was just the example I happened to choose to illustrate the problem. UI occurs in countless situations, and the player who claims to have just taken a “chance” always has some reason for his miraculous recovery after he “judged” to do something odd a bit earlier. I always marvel at how odd it is that these players only seem to recover once their partner's Alert or non-Alert is there to prompt them. Is it possible that what they say happened is what really happened? Sure, but it's even more likely that it was all just a rationalization to justify the player “correcting” his earlier miscalculation after he discovered his mistake through the Alert procedure. The problem is, we never know which player intentionally took a chance and legitimately recovered and which one forgot what he was doing, fell asleep, and was then awakened (perhaps unconsciously) by the UI. The laws say we *must* presume the latter unless the player can convince us that the former was the case.

If you are involved in such a situation, don't try to convince the Director that you “just decided” to bid that way. You may be right, but that's irrelevant. Experienced players may be penalized if their action is judged flagrant. And if their sob story doesn't work on the Director and they appeal in the hopes that a Committee will buy their story, they should be prepared for yet another penalty when their appeal is judged without merit. The average Committee at a local Sectional or Regional tournament may drop the ball and not assess the appropriate penalty; some might even allow the “2♠ bid” as might some inexperienced Directors. But at the national level the hammer will fall far more often than not. So to borrow a line from an old Clint Eastwood Dirty Harry movie, “You need to ask yourself, do you feel lucky? Well, do you punk?”

### **Penalties and the Laws:**

Permit me to digress for a moment. As a general rule, penalties for flagrant actions based on UI are rarely imposed on

inexperienced players or in lower-flighted games. Experienced Directors and Committees prefer to educate these players rather than penalize them. But once they are warned, if they make a habit of this sort of thing they may end up the exception who are penalized. Of course in home or social games all of this becomes moot, since then the goal is just to have fun and socialize. And while this is also a major objective of the ACBL (especially in club games), we should remember that bridge is also a competitive activity. In a purely social game the rules can be relaxed and winning made secondary. But in tournaments competition is of equal importance. Just as the more socially-oriented player has a right to complain if his opponents interfere with his fun and enjoyment of the game, so too the more competitive player has the right to complain if he believes his opponents may have taken advantage of UI, whether it was done intentionally or not. Just as a negligent driver is responsible for any damage he creates, even if it was unintentional, so too the careless player who has UI available to him is responsible for his actions. The opponents can be damaged just as much by accident as by intent.

It strikes me that an UI situation is not so very different from playing “adjective bridge.” Have you ever played? Each player is allowed to attach one adjective to each of his bids. So, for example, you could bid Two “forcing” hearts, or One “non-forcing” spade, or Three “ace-showing” clubs. You could bid Two “Jacoby” notrump, Two “Michaels” spades or Two “Drury” clubs. Would you ever have another bidding misunderstanding if you could play this way all the time? I suspect not. But what if, at your next duplicate game, your opponents began playing this way? Would you call the Director? Would you feel you were being taken advantage of? Well that’s how many players feel when an opponent hesitates, fishes around in his bid box making it clear to his partner what his alternatives are, or makes a bid which takes advantage of his partner’s Alert or answer to an opponent’s question. It’s all illegal in a bridge tournament and protecting the competitive environment is important, even if some less-experienced players think that this is taking unfair advantage of them. Hesitating or forgetting your system and then recovering

through mis-Alerts are just as unfair to more experienced players. Knowing the rules and playing by them is not taking unfair advantage, no matter how loudly and often some players claim it is.

In what other competitive activities is it illegal or unfair to know the rules and use them to your best advantage? When a defensive player jumps offside in football, the opposing quarterback tries to take advantage of it, even by risking an interception or fumble, knowing that he has a guaranteed penalty as a safety net. When a player with the ball is fouled in basketball, he will throw up a prayer of a shot knowing that if he miraculously hits it he gets a bonus foul shot. Playing by the rules and using them to your advantage is part of any competitive endeavor. Sure, you can play a “friendly” game in which strict rules are relaxed, but when you enter a bridge tournament you are entitled to play by the rules—the full rules. This is “touch move.” Becoming a more experienced player involves not only learning to bid and play better but also learning how to play by the rules. *Alert! This does not mean I am advocating that players complain of a foul where none exists.* But asking for protection from damage when an opponent, even an inexperienced one, may have profited from UI is a legitimate part of the game.

Still not convinced? Then try this. If it were legal, experienced players could create UI in far more subtle forms and take far better advantage of it than inexperienced players. If you make no attempts to curb the possible effects of UI, taking the Pollyanna view that everyone’s actions are well-intended, the experts will dominate even more than you ever imagined and there will be nothing the weaker players will be able to do to combat it. But if you apply the laws strictly and uniformly, even though experienced players may have a “temporary” advantage, the less-experienced players will eventually learn what they must do to catch up. Unlike becoming an expert, which not everyone can do, anyone can read the law book and learn how to play by the rules. Eventually the playing field will become level. In the mean time the less-experienced player can choose to play in “protected” events and the less cutthroat player can stick to the more social atmosphere of the

club. But if you want to improve your game, if you want to play competitively, then you have to pay your dues and learn to play by the rules—the full rules.

The preceding was an unpaid political announcement.

### **Back to Alerting and UI:**

Let's return now to the letter writer's Scenario 2. Certainly opener will never pass 2♣ with four-card spade support, but playing Support Doubles he's unlikely to have even three. The only type of hand where opener will hold three spades and not double is when he holds extra values and a more important feature to show than his spade support. But in that case he will not pass; he will bid his other feature. In other words, with weak minimum hands and three-card spade support opener will always double and leave it up to responder to make an informed decision of whether to compete. With any stronger hand and a more important feature than the spade support to show opener will make the more descriptive bid over 2♣ (e.g., jump to 3♦, reverse to 2♥, cue-bid 3♣, etc.). This is evidence that a player who passes with a weak hand with three-card spade support is either a weak bidder or has forgotten his agreement. (If there are other restrictions the pair places on their Support Doubles, they are required to disclose that information as part of the Alert.) But weak bidders also forget their agreements, perhaps even more often than stronger players. Thus, passing 2♣ with the original hand from my article is pretty compelling evidence that the opener forgot Support Doubles.

Could opener hold a hand with strong two-card support and bid 2♠? I personally would not bid this way but if you would that's fine, go ahead

and bid 2♠ over partner's 2♦. if your hand is not suitable for a Support Double (only two spades) then you're free to bid; there's no reason to believe partner's Alert awakened you since there's no evidence that you forgot anything. But if your hand was suitable for a Support Double and you failed to make it over 2♣, then there's reason to believe that partner's Alert woke you up and made the 2♠ bid more attractive. Thus, you cannot be allowed to bid it.

In my article I presumed that you forgot you were playing Support Doubles. But if it was partner who forgot and wrongly Alerted the pass of 2♣ as denying three spades (you aren't playing Support Doubles), things really don't change very much. If a 2♠ bid by you over 2♣ would have shown either three- or four-card support (since there was no double to distinguish the two), then the question still is: Why didn't you bid 2♠ directly over 2♣? Why did you wait and bid it over 2

♦? Partner's Alert still means that he isn't playing you to hold three spades (you might have raised), so bidding them now (when passing 2♦ is a logical alternative) still looks suspiciously like taking advantage of the UI to tell partner that you have three-card support.

Finally, note that the issue here isn't one of misleading the opponents; it's using the UI to improve your chances of attaining a good score. Is there any reason to think that the UI from these Alerts is "trivial"? If the opponents end up with -110 defending 2♠ when they would have beaten 2♦ for +50, is that trivial? If they end up with +50 defending 3♠ (after your 2♠ bid allows partner to compete) rather than scoring +110 in 3♣, is that trivial? Sorry, but in my book none of this is trivial—it's all damage.



Tetsuro Goto



Richard Grenside



"Mr. Magic"



Paul Hackett



Masaru Naniwada